

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 19, 2008. Claims 23 to 28 and 86 to 91 are pending in the application, of which Claims 23 to 28 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 25 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,401,150 (Reilly) over U.S. Patent No. 6,503,147 (Stockdale). Claims 23, 24, 26, 27 and 86 to 91 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Reilly in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,009,527 (Traw) and further in view of Stockdale. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns a gaming machine printer that manages communications between the gaming machine printer and a game controller and between the gaming machine printer and an external device that may be connected and disconnected from the gaming machine printer.

In another aspect of the invention, the gaming machine printer monitors a plurality of communication ports and sets up a communication port as a special native port when the gaming machine printer determines that a game controller is coupled to that port.

In another aspect of the invention, the gaming machine printer notifies the game controller both before and after the gaming machine printer communicates with the external device. In another aspect of the invention, the gaming machine printer monitors itself and stores status information in a non-volatile memory. If communications with the game controller are lost and then restored, the gaming machine printer transmits a status report to the game controller based on the stored status information.

Claims 23 and 24

Turning now to the claims, Claim 23 is directed to a gaming machine printer. The gaming machine printer comprises a processor, a first communication port coupled to the processor, a second communication port coupled to the processor, the second communication port a native communication port connecting a game controller as a trusted host to the gaming machine printer and a memory coupled to the processor, the memory having programing instructions executable by the processor stored therein. The program instructions comprise determining by the gaming machine printer when an external device is coupled to the first communication port, notifying by the gaming machine printer the game controller coupled to the second communication port when the external device is coupled to the first communication port, disconnecting by the gaming machine printer communications from the game controller, establishing by the gaming machine printer a trusted communication session with the external device and reporting by the gaming machine printer the communication session to the game controller when the communication session is completed and communications are restored by the gaming machine printer to the game controller.

Independent Claim 24 is directed to a method substantially in accordance with the gaming machine printer of Claim 23.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claims 23 and 24, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of notifying by the gaming machine printer the game controller coupled to the second communication port when the external device is coupled to the first communication port, disconnecting by the gaming machine printer communications from the game controller when the external device is coupled to the first communication port and reporting by the gaming machine printer the

communication session to the game controller when the communication session with the external device is completed and communications are restored by the gaming machine printer to the game controller.

As understood by Applicants, Reilly discloses a centralized queue for network printing, in which clients of a network printer can make job requests and enter a spot in a job queue without transmitting actual print job data to the network. (See Reilly, Abstract.)

In referring to Reilly, the Office Action contends that Reilly discloses “notifying by the gaming machine printer the game controller coupled to the second communication port when the external device is coupled to the first communication port” as featured in the claims. In support of this contention, the Office Action cites to Reilly, column 6, lines 45 to 55, wherein it is disclosed that “CSCP facilitates **reconnection** to previously connected hosts. IDP uses the **reconnection** mechanism to implement remote queuing features, to subsequently request job data and to send asynchronous status updates to clients which support IDP.” (See, Reilly, column 6, lines 45 to 49, emphasis added). As clearly stated in Reilly, the “asynchronous status updates to clients which support IDP” which the Office Action relies are only sent **after** a host reconnects to the network printer of Reilly. No mention is made in Reilly of notifying by the gaming machine printer the game controller coupled to the second communication port **when an external device is coupled to a first communication port**. In fact, the mechanism relied upon by the Office Action is a mechanism that is only invoked **after** a host has already disconnected with the network printer and cannot possibly be used to notify a game controller by a gaming machine printer that has determined that an external device is connected to another communication port. In the present invention, the notification is sent by the gaming machine printer when the gaming machine

printer establishes communication with the external device. No such a process with such a precondition is evenly remotely suggested by Reilly.

In addition, the Office Action cites to Reilly as disclosing “disconnecting by the gaming machine printer communications from the game controller.” In particular, the Office Action cites Reilly as disclosing a “close call” in a socket package used to close a connection to a host. (See Reilly, column 5, lines 26 to 49). While a “close call” may be used to close a socket connection, Reilly fails to disclose or suggest that the “close call” is used by a gaming machine printer to disconnect from a game controller when an external device is coupled to a first communication port. That is, there is no linkage in Reilly between closing a socket in order to communicate with another host.

Finally, Reilly discloses at column 6, lines 25 to 55 a Client Server Connection Protocol (CSCP) layer in a network printer. This layer includes a service provided by a network printer for a host to reconnect with the network printer. Once reconnecting is completed by the host, the remote printer provides services for remote queuing, requesting job data and sending asynchronous status updates. Firstly, Applicant submits that nothing in the services provided by the network printer remotely resemble reporting the communication session to the game controller when a communication session is completed as featured in the claims. As understood by Applicants, “remote queuing” is a service that allows a host to submit a print job for queuing at the network printer, “requesting job data” is a service by which the network printer requests print data from the host and “asynchronous status updates” is understood to be a status update of the printer queue. None of these services is related to notifying a game controller that a gaming machine printer has completed a communication session with an external device. Secondly, Applicants have amended the claims to clarify that

it is the gaming machine printer, and not the game controller, that initiates the restoration of communications with the game controller when the communication session with the external device is completed. In Reilly, it is the host that initiates reconnecting with the network printer using the services supplied by the CSCP library and there is no suggestion that the network printer can initiate reconnecting. (See Reilly, column 6, lines 31 to 40.)

Stockdale is not seen to remedy the deficiencies of Reilly. As understood by Applicants, Stockdale is generally directed to a gaming machine including a plurality of gaming peripherals. See Stockdale, Abstract. Referring to Figs. 2 and 3 of Stockdale, Stockdale discloses a peripheral controller 234 that may be coupled to one or more peripherals such as printer 238 through a single peripheral interface 318.

However, while Stockdale's peripheral controller 234 has the ability to couple to a plurality of peripherals through the peripheral interface 318, the peripheral controller only has a single possible connection through a hub 230 to a master gaming controller 200. There is no disclosure or suggestion in Stockdale of notifying by the gaming machine printer the game controller coupled to the second communication port when the external device is coupled to the first communication port, disconnecting by the gaming machine printer communications from the game controller when the external device is coupled to the first communication port and reporting by the gaming machine printer the communication session to the game controller when the communication session with the external device is completed and communications are restored by the gaming machine printer to the game controller.

Therefore, as neither Reilly nor Stockdale disclose the features of notifying by the gaming machine printer the game controller coupled to the second communication port when the external device is coupled to the first communication port, disconnecting by the

gaming machine printer communications from the game controller when the external device is coupled to the first communication port and reporting by the gaming machine printer the communication session to the game controller when the communication session with the external device is completed and communications are restored by the gaming machine printer to the game controller, it cannot be said that Reilly as modified by Stockdale could disclose these features. As such, Applicants submit that independent Claims 23 and 24 are in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claims 26 and 27

The invention of Claims 26 and 27 generally concerns operation of a gaming machine printer having a plurality of communication ports. According to aspects of Claims 26 and 27, for each of a plurality of communication ports, it is determined if a game controller is coupled to the communication port, and the communication port is established as a native communication port to a trusted host when the game controller is detected on the communication port.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 26 is directed to a method of operating a gaming machine printer having a plurality of communication ports. The method comprises for each of the plurality of communication ports, determining by the gaming machine printer if a game controller is coupled to the communication port and establishing by the gaming machine printer the communication port as a native communication port that is disconnected from the game controller prior to performing a separate function, the native port for connection to the game controller as a trusted host when the game controller is detected on the communication port.

Independent Claim 27 is directed to a gaming machine printer substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 26.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claims 26 and 27, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of, for each of a plurality of communication ports, determining by a gaming machine printer if a game controller is coupled to the communication port and establishing by the gaming machine printer the communication port as a native communication port that is disconnected from the game controller prior to performing a separate function, the native port for connection to the game controller as a trusted host when the game controller is detected on the communication port.

In particular, Reilly is not seen to disclose a trusted host at all, much less determining if a game controller is coupled to a communication port and establishing the communication port as a native communication port to a trusted host when the game controller is detected on the communication port.

In addition, Stockdale is not seen to remedy the deficiencies of Reilly. Specifically, in Stockdale, there is only one possible connection for the peripheral controller 234 to connect to the master gaming controller 200, namely via hub 230. Therefore, the peripheral controller 234 does not have a mechanism for determining if a game controller is coupled to game controller by a communication port from among a plurality of communication ports.

Finally, Traw is seen to disclose a computer that validates a peripheral. This is not at all analogous the feature in the present invention of establishing by the gaming machine

printer the communication port as a native communication port that is disconnected from the game controller prior to performing a separate function, the native port for connection to the game controller as a trusted host when the game controller is detected on the communication port. Initially, Applicants' note that nothing in Traw discloses the concept of a native port that is disconnected by the gaming machine printer from the game controller prior to performing a separate function. In addition, in Traw it is the computer, and not the peripheral, that acts to verify the peripheral. In the present invention, it is the gaming machine printer that determines that the communication port is a native port and not the game controller.

Therefore, independent Claims 26 and 27 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claims 25 and 28

The invention of Claims 25 and 28 generally concerns a gaming machine printer, including a communication port coupling the gaming machine printer to a game controller. The status of the gaming machine printer is stored in a nonvolatile memory.

According to aspects of Claims 25 and 28, the status of a communication link to a game controller via the communication port is determined by the gaming machine printer, the status of the gaming machine printer is locked in the nonvolatile memory by the gaming machine printer when the gaming machine printer determines that the communications link is interrupted, and the status of the gaming machine printer is transmitted by the gaming machine printer to the game controller when the communication link is reestablished by the gaming machine printer.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 25 is directed to a gaming machine printer. The gaming machine printer includes a processor, a communication port coupling the gaming machine printer to a game controller, a nonvolatile memory store coupled to the processor, and a memory coupled to the processor, the memory having program instructions executable by the processor stored therein. The program instructions include storing a status of the gaming machine printer in the nonvolatile memory, determining the status of a communication link to the game controller via the communication port, locking the status of the gaming machine printer in the nonvolatile memory when the gaming machine printer determines that the communication link is interrupted, and transmitting the status of the gaming machine printer to the game controller when the communication link is reestablished.

Independent Claim 28 is directed to a method substantially in accordance with the gaming machine printer of Claim 25.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claims 25 and 28, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of determining by the gaming machine printer the status of a communication link to a game controller via the communication port, locking by the gaming machine printer the status of the gaming machine printer in the nonvolatile memory when the gaming machine printer determines that the communications link is interrupted, and transmitting by the gaming machine printer the status of the gaming machine printer to the game controller when the communication link is reestablished by the gaming machine printer.

In particular, Reilly is not seen to disclose or suggest transmitting the status of the gaming machine printer to the game controller when the communication link is

reestablished by the gaming machine printer. In the cited portions of Reilly, it is disclosed that a network printer can perform a “call back” to a host in order to request data for a print job. However, this feature is only provided after reconnecting by a host. (See Reilly, column 6, lines 45 to 55). This reconnection facility is provided by the CSCP library which has been previously described. According to Reilly, the CSCP library allows a network printer acting as a server to open a passive port that advertises a service. The port only becomes active when a host requests access to the port by a matching service request. (See Reilly, column 6, lines 31 to 40.) Therefore, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Reilly of initiating by a gaming machine printer a transmission of a status to a game controller when the gaming machine printer reestablishes a connection to the game controller.

Stockdale is not seen to remedy the deficiencies of Reilly. In particular, Stockdale discloses that state history of peripherals connected to the peripheral controller 234 may be communicated to the master gaming controller 200 when the game is powered-up. However, Stockdale fails to disclose or suggest transmitting the status of the gaming machine printer to the game controller when the communication link is reestablished by the gaming machine printer.

Therefore, independent Claims 25 and 28 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.